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REMARKS

AUG 18 2006

The present patent application has been reviewed in light of the Final Office Action dated March 8, 2006, in which claims 22-30 are objected to as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Claims 22-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Os et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,480,304 (hereinafter "Os"). Entry and consideration of this submission is respectfully requested.

Claims 22-30 have been amended and claims 31-44 have been added without prejudice or disclaimer. Support can be found throughout the specification for the new claims. For example, support for claims 31-44 may be found in the portion of the detailed description associated with Figures 3-5.

Assignee has amended claims to more clearly delineate intended subject matter. Amendments to claims are made without prejudice or disclaimer, and Assignee believes that none of the clarifying claim amendments constitute narrowing amendments. In fact, some of these claim amendments are intended to be broadening amendments. Accordingly, Assignee does not intend to surrender claimed subject matter by submission of the above amendments and no prosecution history estoppel should apply.

Objections to the Claims

Claims 23-29 have been amended to place the claims in proper dependent form. Therefore, Assignee respectfully requests that the objection to these claims be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 22-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Os. However, Os does not disclose "determining a priority of each of the plurality of communication gateways" as claimed in claim 22. Therefore, claim 22, and the claims that depend from it, are not anticipated by Os. Claim 30 includes similar limitations, and therefore is also not anticipated by Os. For at least these reasons, Assignee respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejections as to these claims.

It is noted that claimed subject matter may be patentably distinguished from the cited patents and/or patent application for additional reasons; however, the foregoing is believed to be sufficient. Likewise, it is noted that the Assignee's failure to comment directly upon any of the positions asserted by the Examiner in the office action does not indicate agreement or acquiescence with those asserted positions.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully asserted that all of the claims pending in the present patent application are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions, he is invited to contact the undersigned at (503) 439-6500. Entry of this amendment and reconsideration of the present patent application in view of the same, and early allowance of all the claims is respectfully requested. Please charge any underpayments or credit any overpayments to deposit account no. 50-3703.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: August 18, 2006

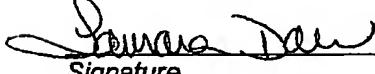
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August 18, 2006
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